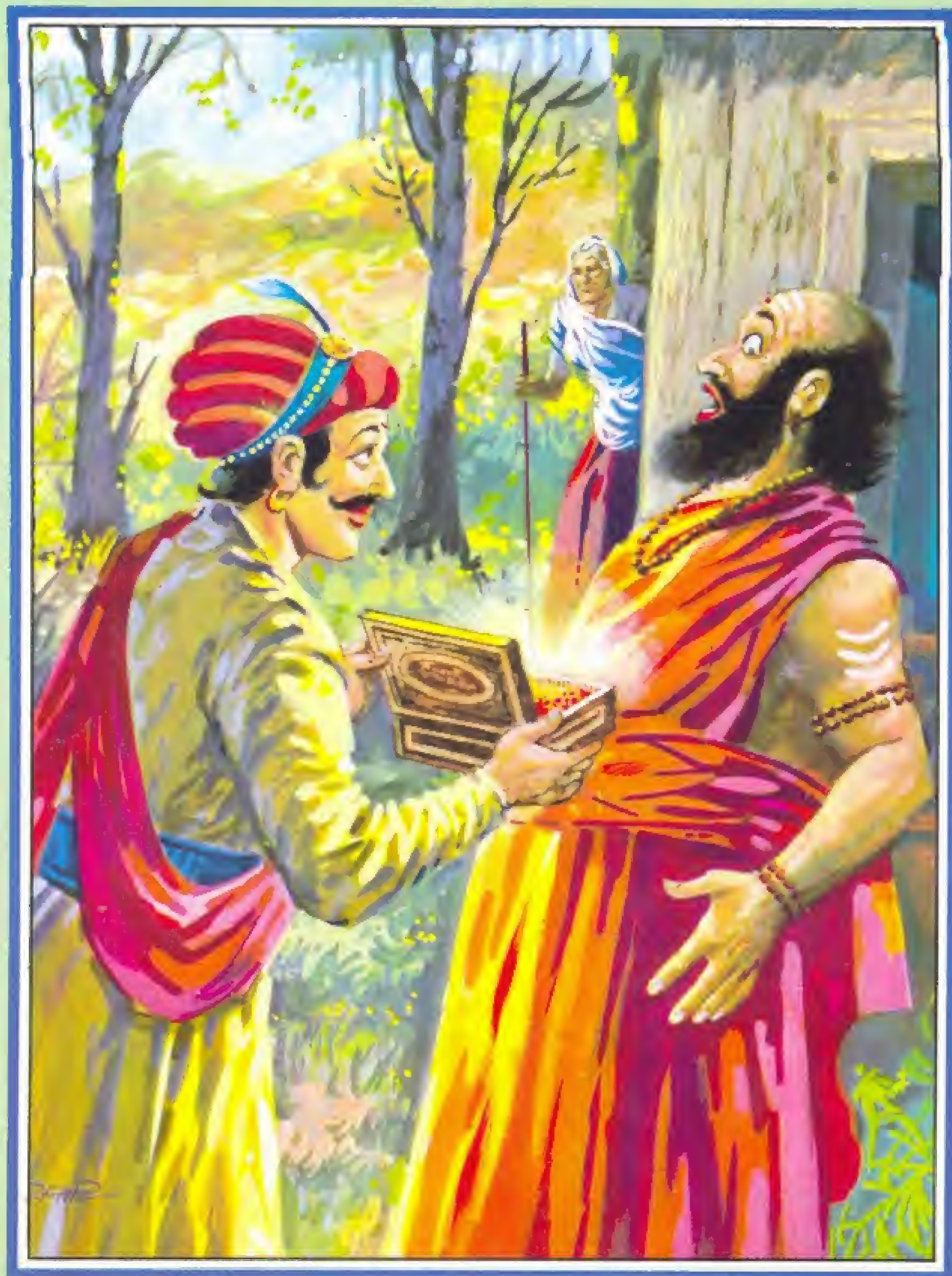




Vol. 618 Rs. 25

Birbal to the Rescue



Amar Chitra Katha: the Glorious Heritage of India



BIRBAL TO THE RESCUE

The wit and wisdom of Birbal had endeared him not only to Akbar, but also to a vast majority of the subjects of the Mughal empire. He had the rare distinction of achieving immense popularity during his lifetime, next only to that of Akbar. He was a good administrator, a good soldier and perhaps what pleased Akbar the most—a good jester. Less known is the fact that he was also a good poet. He wrote under the pen-name, "Brahma" and a collection of his poems is preserved in the Bharatpur Museum.

Though popularly known as Birbal, his real name was Maheshdas. It is believed that he belonged to a poor brahmin family of Trivikrampur (now known as Tikawanpur) on the banks of the River Yamuna. But it was only by virtue of his sharp intellect that he rose to be a minister at the court of Akbar. His phenomenal success made many courtiers jealous of him and if the popular accounts are to be believed, they were ever busy plotting against him. According to popular legend even his death, while he was on an expedition to Afghanistan at the head of a large military force, was due to treachery. Though he was killed in the battle, the expedition was successful and subdued the turbulent province.

Akbar was so deeply moved, when he heard the news of Birbal's death, that he burst forth into a couplet and lamented, "Birbal, you never hurt the helpless. You always gave them whatever you had. I am helpless now and yet you have left nothing for me."

Akbar had found in Birbal a true friend and sympathiser. Of the handful of followers of the Din-e-Elahi, the new faith preached by Akbar, there was only one Hindu, Birbal.

Script:
Meera Ugra

Illustrations:
Ram Waerkar

AMAR CHITRA KATHA:

The Route to Your Roots

Over 78 million copies have been sold so far

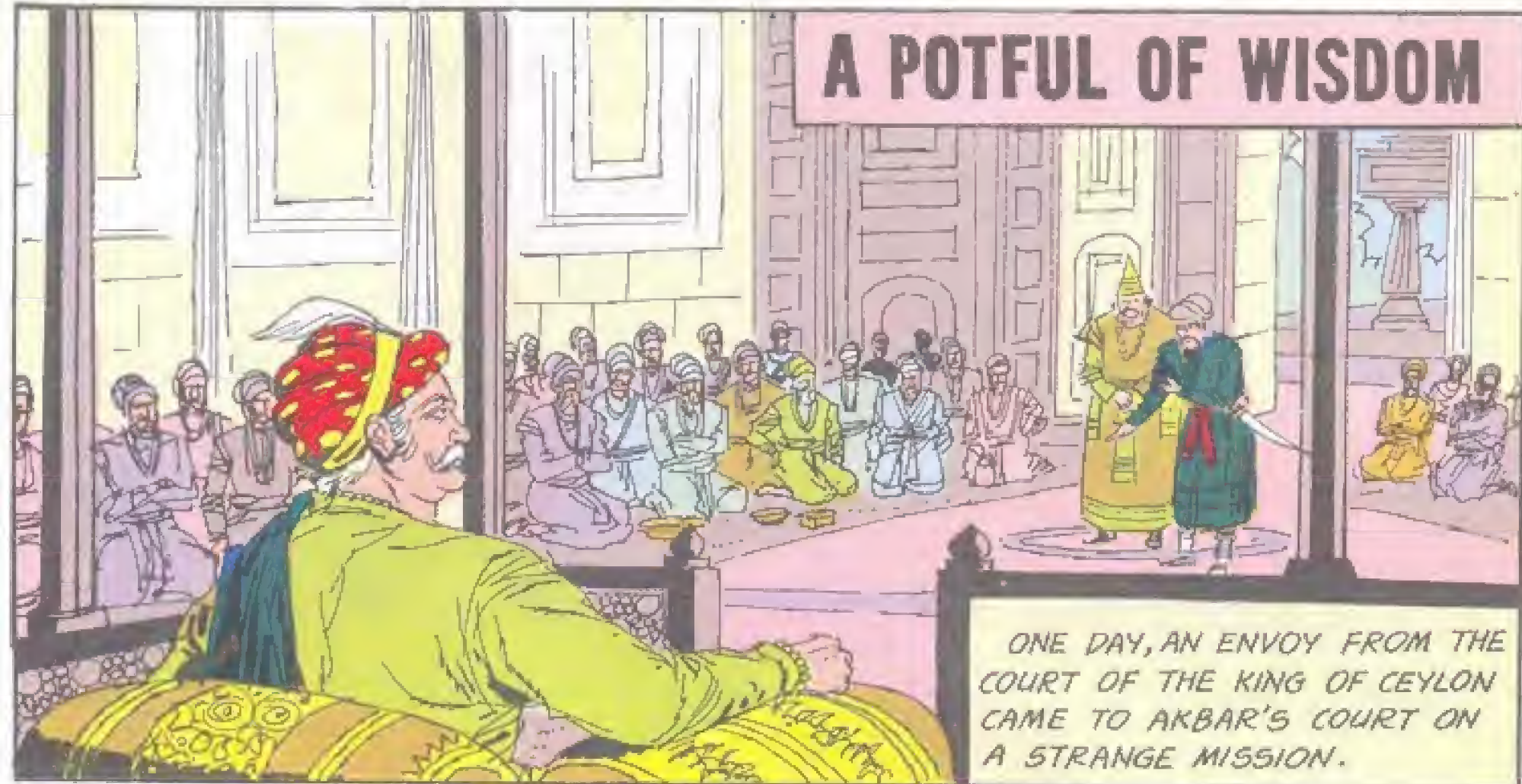
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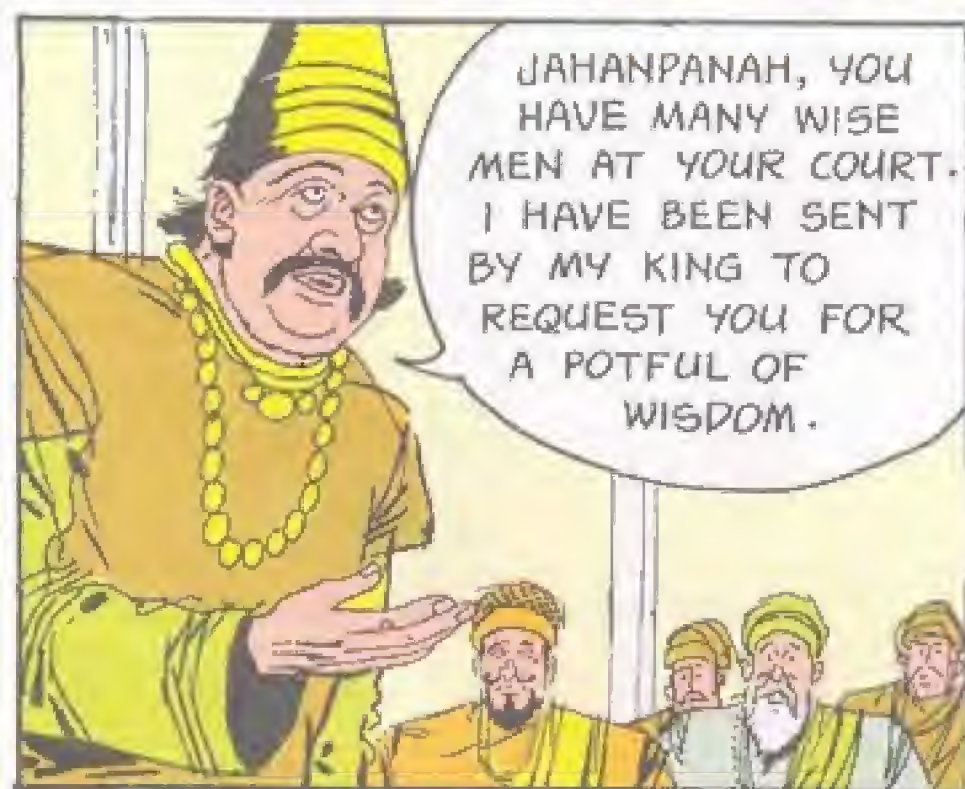
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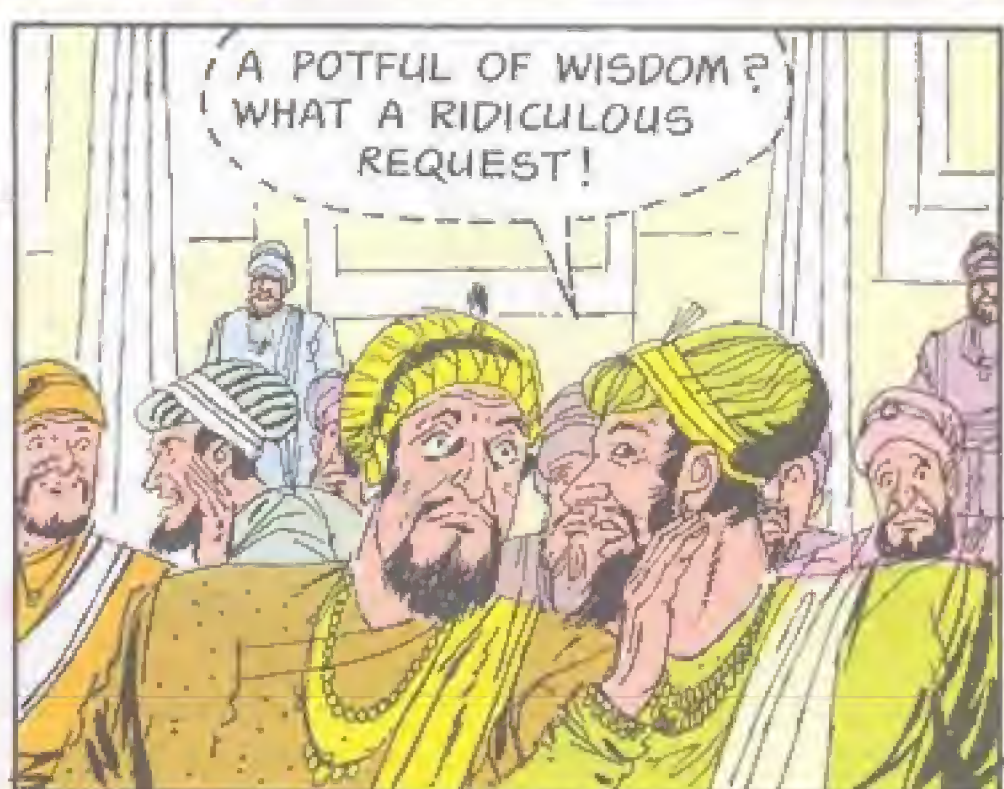
A POTFUL OF WISDOM



ONE DAY, AN ENVOY FROM THE COURT OF THE KING OF CEYLON CAME TO AKBAR'S COURT ON A STRANGE MISSION.



JAHANPANAHA, YOU HAVE MANY WISE MEN AT YOUR COURT. I HAVE BEEN SENT BY MY KING TO REQUEST YOU FOR A POTFUL OF WISDOM.



A POTFUL OF WISDOM? WHAT A RIDICULOUS REQUEST!



THE KING OF CEYLON IS OUT TO BAFFLE US.

AND HE'LL SUCCEED. NO ONE, NOT EVEN BIRBAL, CAN GET US OUT OF THIS ONE.



AT THE PUMPKIN PATCH —

GIVE ME ONE OF THOSE POTS.



BIRBAL CAREFULLY PLACED THE POT OVER A PUMPKIN FLOWER.



NOW PLACE THE OTHER POTS IN THE SAME MANNER.



WHEN THE ATTENDANT FINISHED PLACING THE LAST POT —

KEEP AN EYE ON THESE, AND DON'T LET THEM BE MOVED.



I'LL HAVE THEM COLLECTED LATER.

ANY TIME, HUZUR.



A FEW WEEKS LATER —

HAVE YOU MADE ANY PROGRESS, BIRBAL?

YES, JAHANPANA. I'M ALMOST THROUGH WITH THE TASK.

I SHOULD BE ABLE TO HAVE THE POT FILLED IN... SAY... A FORTNIGHT.

A FORTNIGHT LATER —

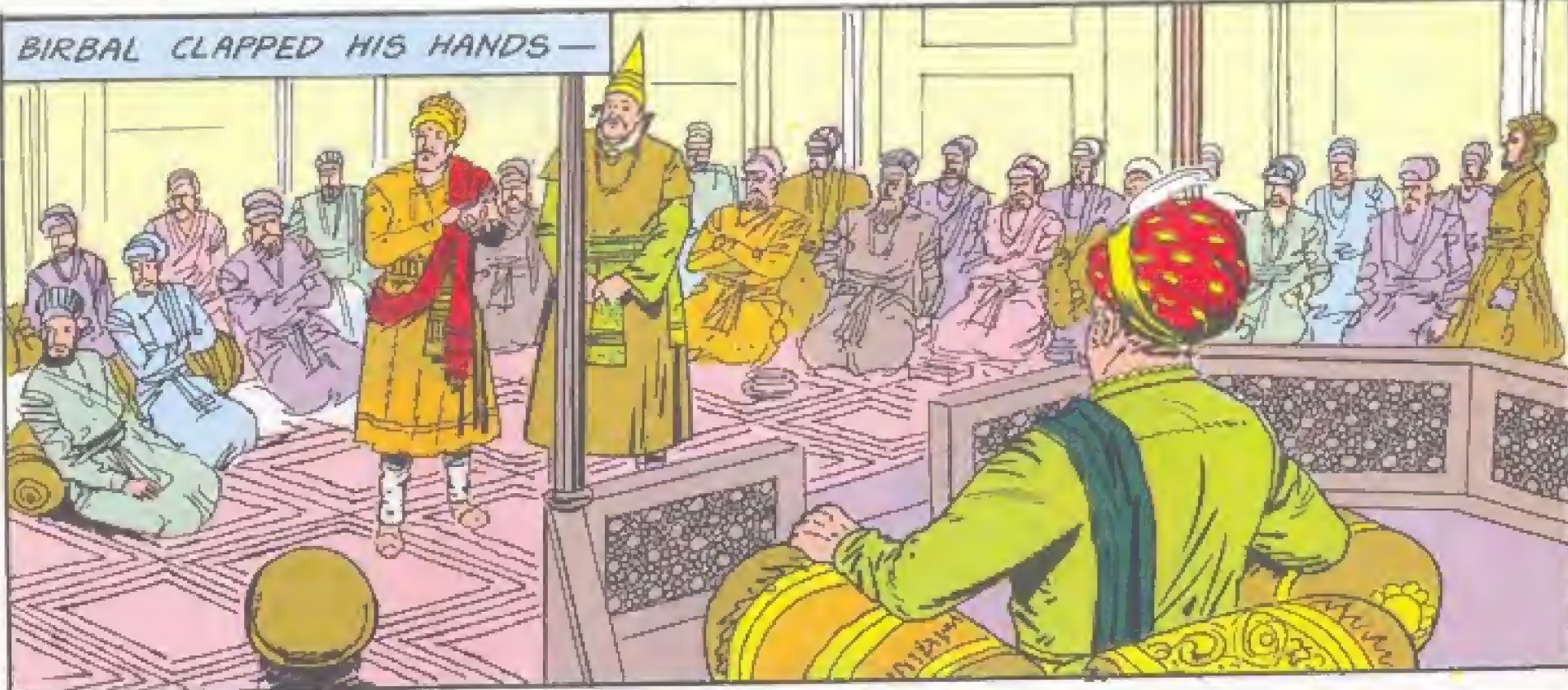
AHA — NOW THEY ARE ALMOST AS BIG AS THE POTS! GOOD!

YOU SHALL BE HANDSOMELY REWARDED FOR YOUR LABOUR.

LATER BIRBAL HAD THE ENVOY SUMMONED TO COURT.

THE POTFUL OF WISDOM IS READY, JAHANPANA.

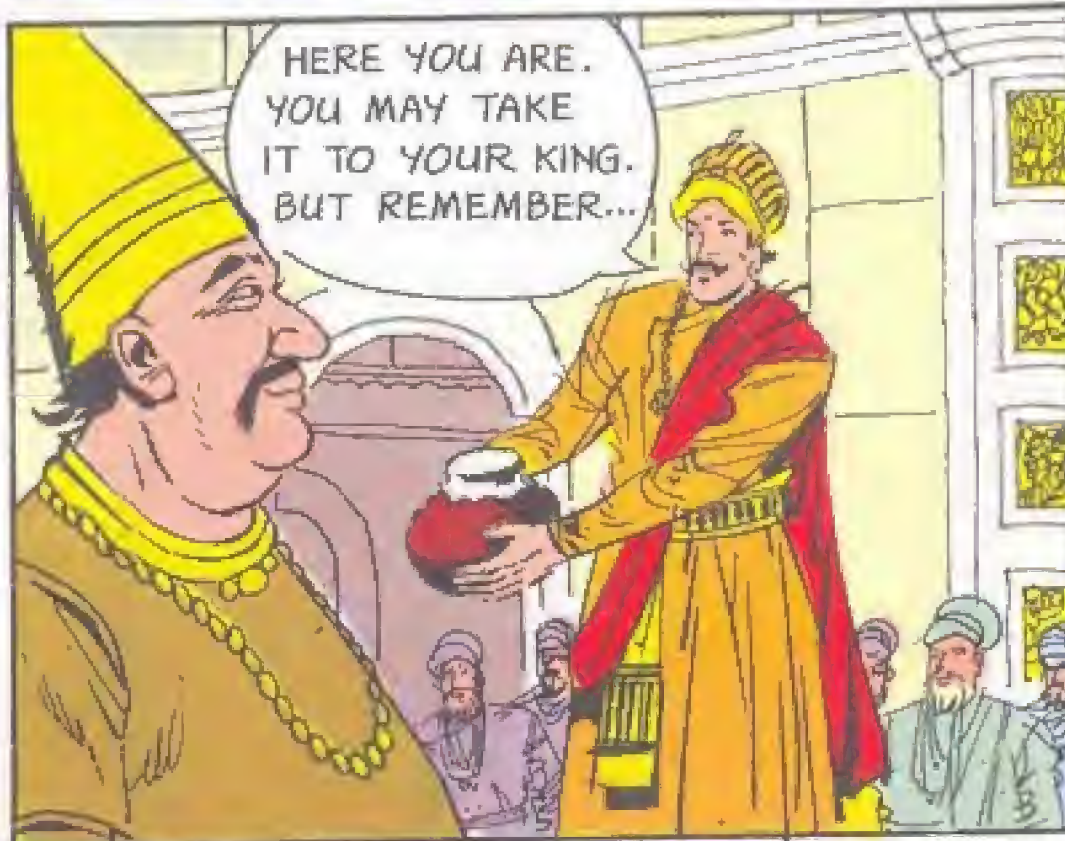
BIRBAL CLAPPED HIS HANDS —



THE NEXT MOMENT, HIS ATTEND-
ANT WALKED SOLEMNLY IN,
CARRYING A TRAY WITH A POT
ON IT.



HERE YOU ARE.
YOU MAY TAKE
IT TO YOUR KING.
BUT REMEMBER...



...OUR PRECIOUS
POT MUST BE
RETURNED EMPTY
AND INTACT.
AND...



...THE FRUIT OF
WISDOM THAT IT
CONTAINS, TO BE OF
ANY VALUE,
MUST BE
REMOVED
WITHOUT
A SCRATCH!





AS SOON AS THE ENVOY LEFT—

BIRBAL, I AM CURIOUS TO HAVE A LOOK AT THE FRUIT OF WISDOM. YOU SAID YOU HAVE FIVE MORE.

I'LL HAVE THEM SENT TO YOU, JAHAN-PANAH.



WHEN THE OTHER POTS WERE BROUGHT, AKBAR LOOKED INTO ONE OF THEM...



HA! HA! HA! THE FRUIT OF WISDOM INDEED! IT WILL CERTAINLY MAKE THE KING OF CEYLON A WISER MAN, THOUGH!



THE EMPEROR'S TOUCH



ONE DAY, AN OLD WOMAN AND HER WIDOWED DAUGHTER-IN-LAW CAME TO BIRBAL.



MY SON HAD SERVED IN THE ROYAL ARMY FOR TWENTY YEARS. BUT NOW, HE IS DEAD AND WE HAVE NO ONE TO TURN TO!

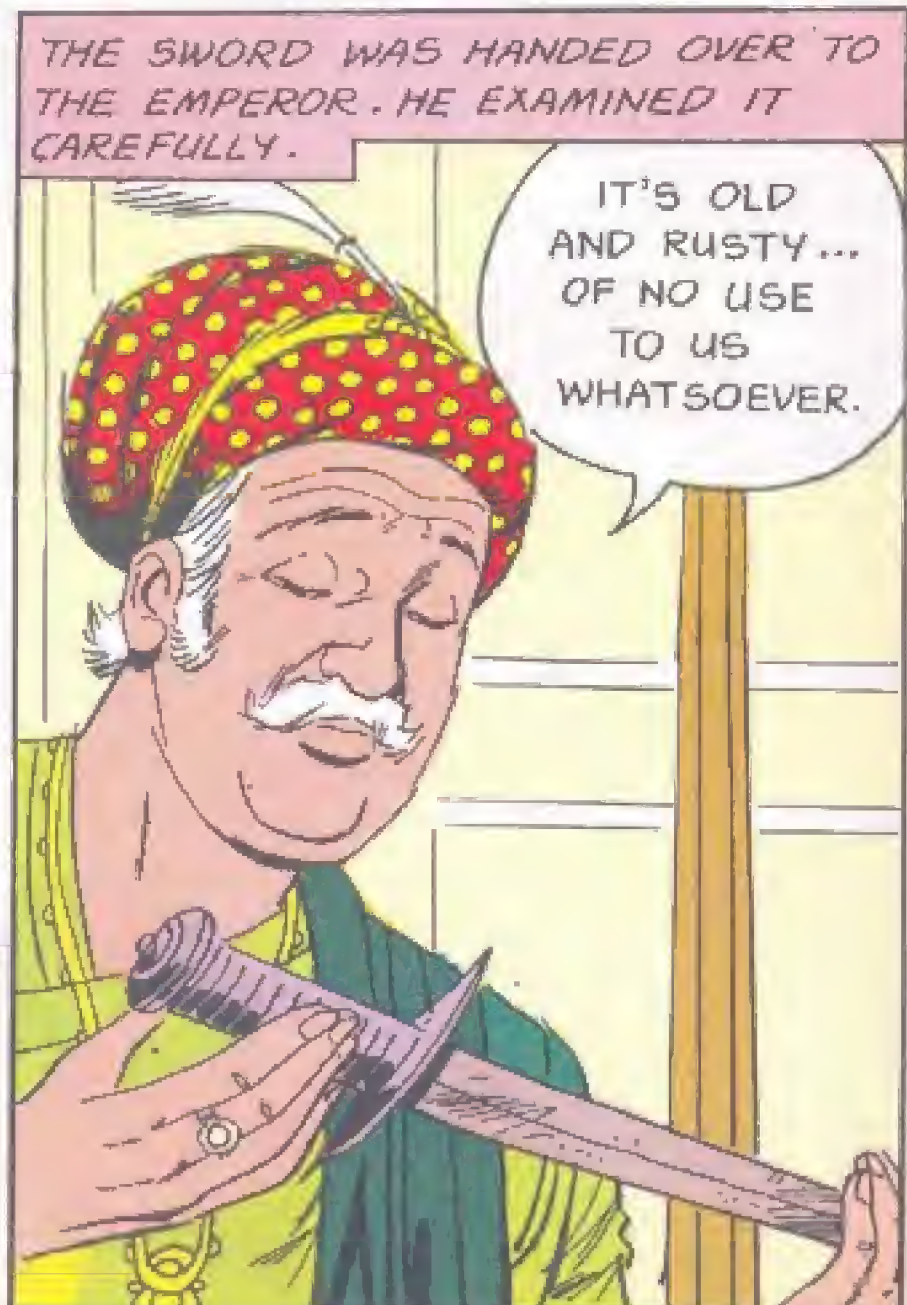
OUR EMPEROR IS KIND AND GENEROUS. HE WILL HELP YOU. DO AS I SAY.



THE FOLLOWING DAY, AT COURT—

JAHANPANA, THIS SWORD ONCE WIELDED BY MY SON HAS WON MANY BATTLES FOR YOU. SO, PLEASE KEEP IT IN THE ARMOURY.

LET ME SEE IT.



THE SWORD WAS HANDED OVER TO THE EMPEROR. HE EXAMINED IT CAREFULLY.

IT'S OLD AND RUSTY... OF NO USE TO US WHATSOEVER.

HE GAVE THE SWORD TO AN ATTENDANT.

RETURN IT TO HER
AND GIVE HER FIVE
GOLD COINS FOR
HER TROUBLE.



JUST
FIVE GOLD
COINS!



MAY
I INSPECT
THE SWORD,
JAHANPANA?



BIRBAL TOOK THE
SWORD...

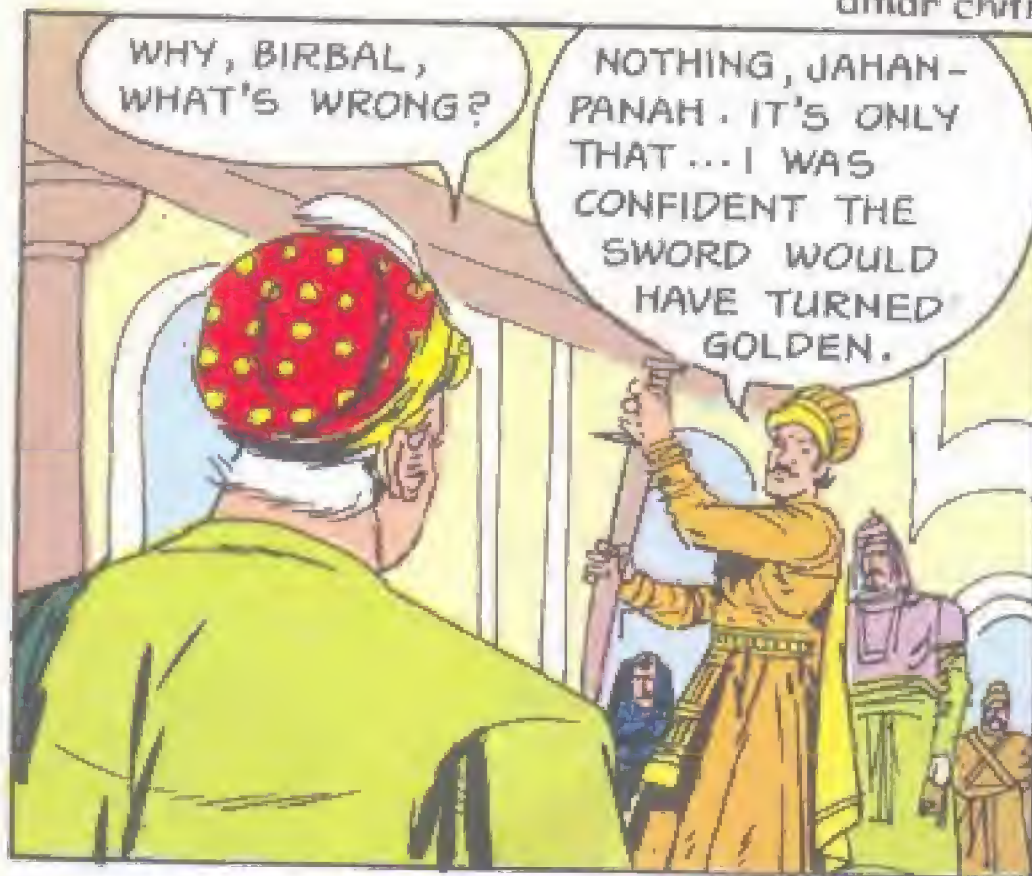


...AND LOOKED AT IT CLOSELY...



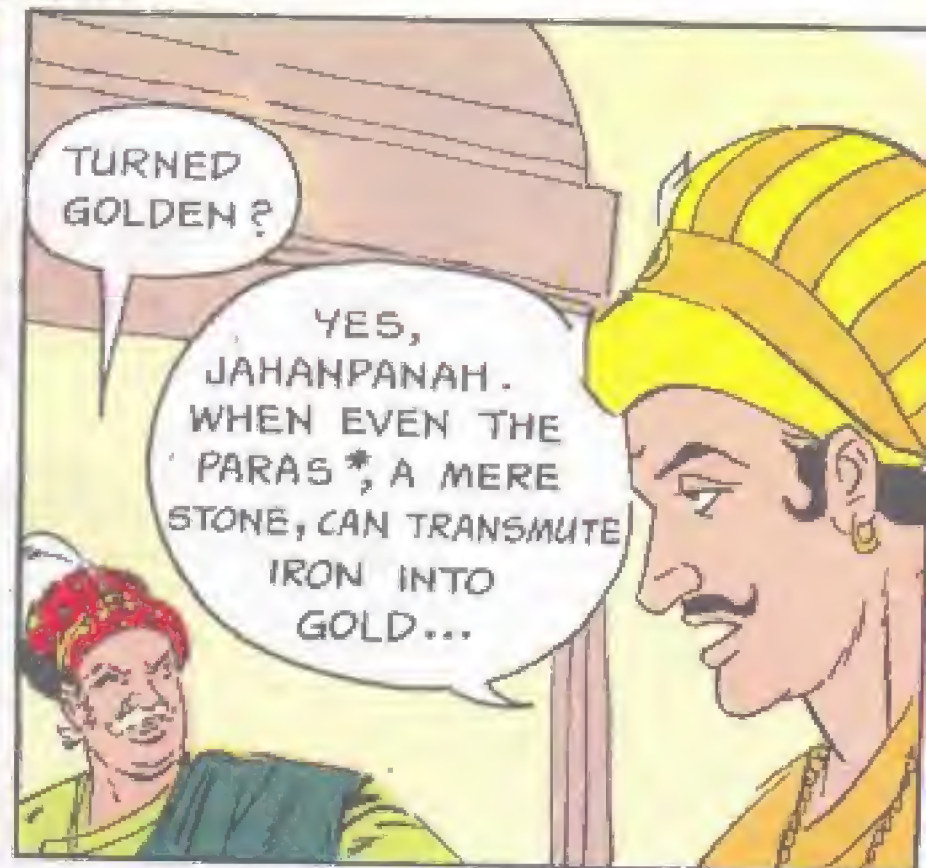
...AGAIN AND AGAIN.





WHY, BIRBAL,
WHAT'S WRONG?

NOTHING, JAHAN-
PANAH. IT'S ONLY
THAT ... I WAS
CONFIDENT THE
SWORD WOULD
HAVE TURNED
GOLDEN.



TURNED
GOLDEN?

YES,
JAHANPANAH.
WHEN EVEN THE
PARAS*, A MERE
STONE, CAN TRANSMUTE
IRON INTO
GOLD...



...I'M SURPRISED
THAT WHILE
PASSING THROUGH
YOUR BENEVOLENT
HANDS...



... WELL ...



AKBAR UNDERSTOOD.

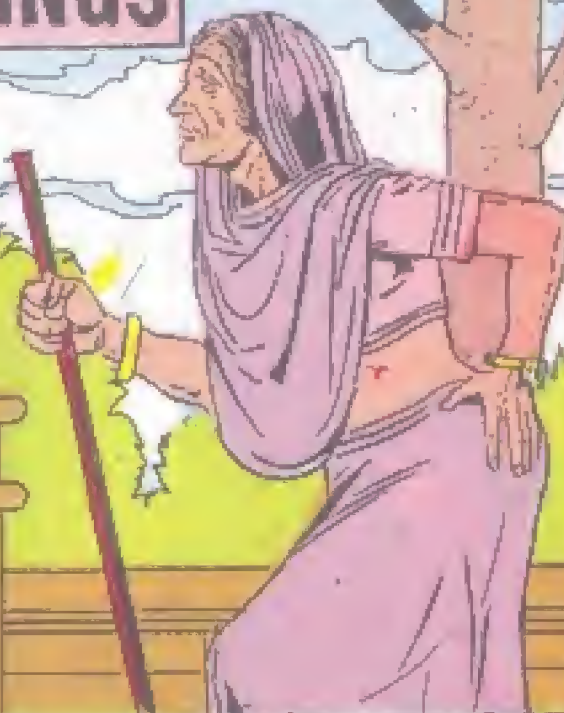
GIVE THE WOMAN
GOLD EQUAL TO THE
WEIGHT OF THE
SWORD.

AFTER RECEIVING THE GOLD,
THE WOMEN WENT AWAY
BLESSING THE EMPEROR
—AND BIRBAL!

* A LEGENDARY STONE CREDITED WITH THE POWER OF CHANGING IRON INTO GOLD

A WIDOW'S SAVINGS

THE RICH AND THE POOR, THE YOUNG AND THE OLD, ALL SOUGHT BIRBAL'S HELP WHEN THEY WERE WRONGED. ONE DAY AN OLD WIDOW CAME TO SEE HIM.



HELP ME, HUZUR.
I'VE BEEN
SWINDLED.

BY
WHOM?



IT'S A LONG STORY,
HUZUR. SIX MONTHS
AGO, I DECIDED TO
GO ON A
PILGRIMAGE.



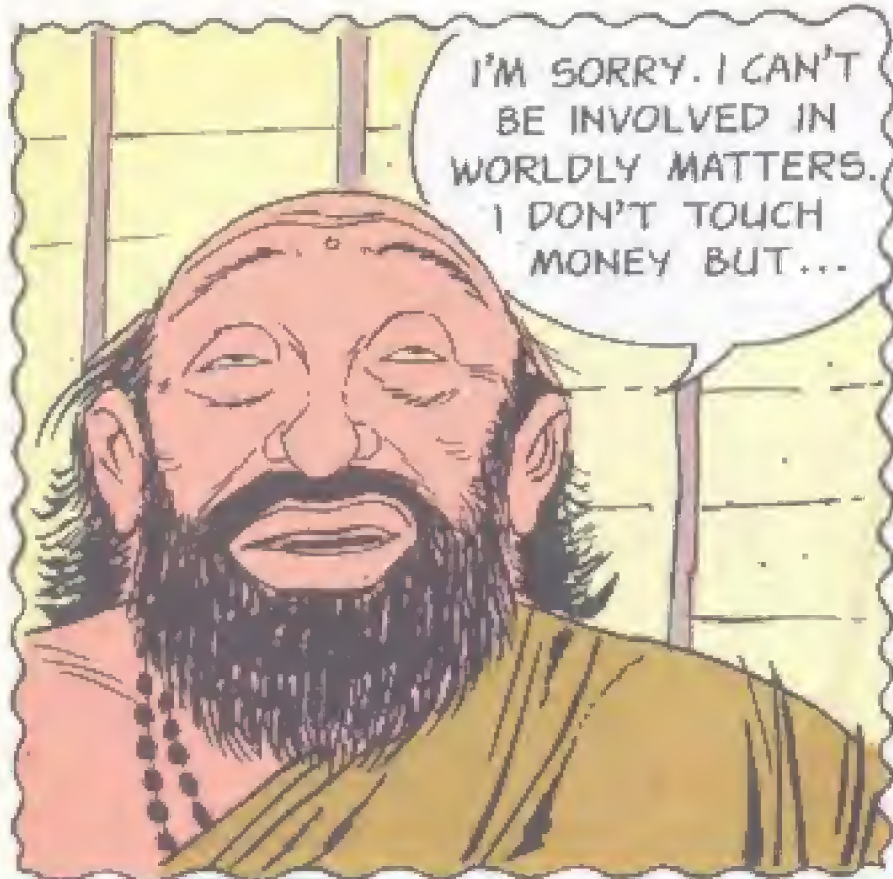
BUT I WAS WORRIED
ABOUT MY MONEY.
I DIDN'T KNOW
WHERE TO
KEEP IT.



"FINALLY, I WENT TO
A MENDICANT."

HERE IS A BAG OF
COPPER COINS — ALL THAT
I HAVE IN THIS WORLD.
PLEASE KEEP IT FOR ME.
IT WILL BE SAFE WITH
YOU!





I'M SORRY. I CAN'T
BE INVOLVED IN
WORLDLY MATTERS.
I DON'T TOUCH
MONEY BUT...



... YOU MAY DIG
A HOLE SOMEWHERE
IN MY HUT AND
BURY THE BAG
THERE YOURSELF.



"SO I WENT TO A CORNER OF
THE HUT AND DUG A SMALL HOLE."



MY COINS
WILL BE
SAFE HERE.

"ON MY RETURN, WHEN I WENT TO THE MENDICANT
TO COLLECT THE MONEY —"



WHAT MONEY
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT ?



THE BAG OF
COINS
I BURIED
IN YOUR
HUT.

YOU KNOW
WHERE YOU'VE
BURIED IT! FIND
IT AND TAKE
IT.

BUT, DON'T SPEAK
ABOUT MONEY TO
ME. I DON'T EVEN
WANT TO HEAR
THAT WORD.

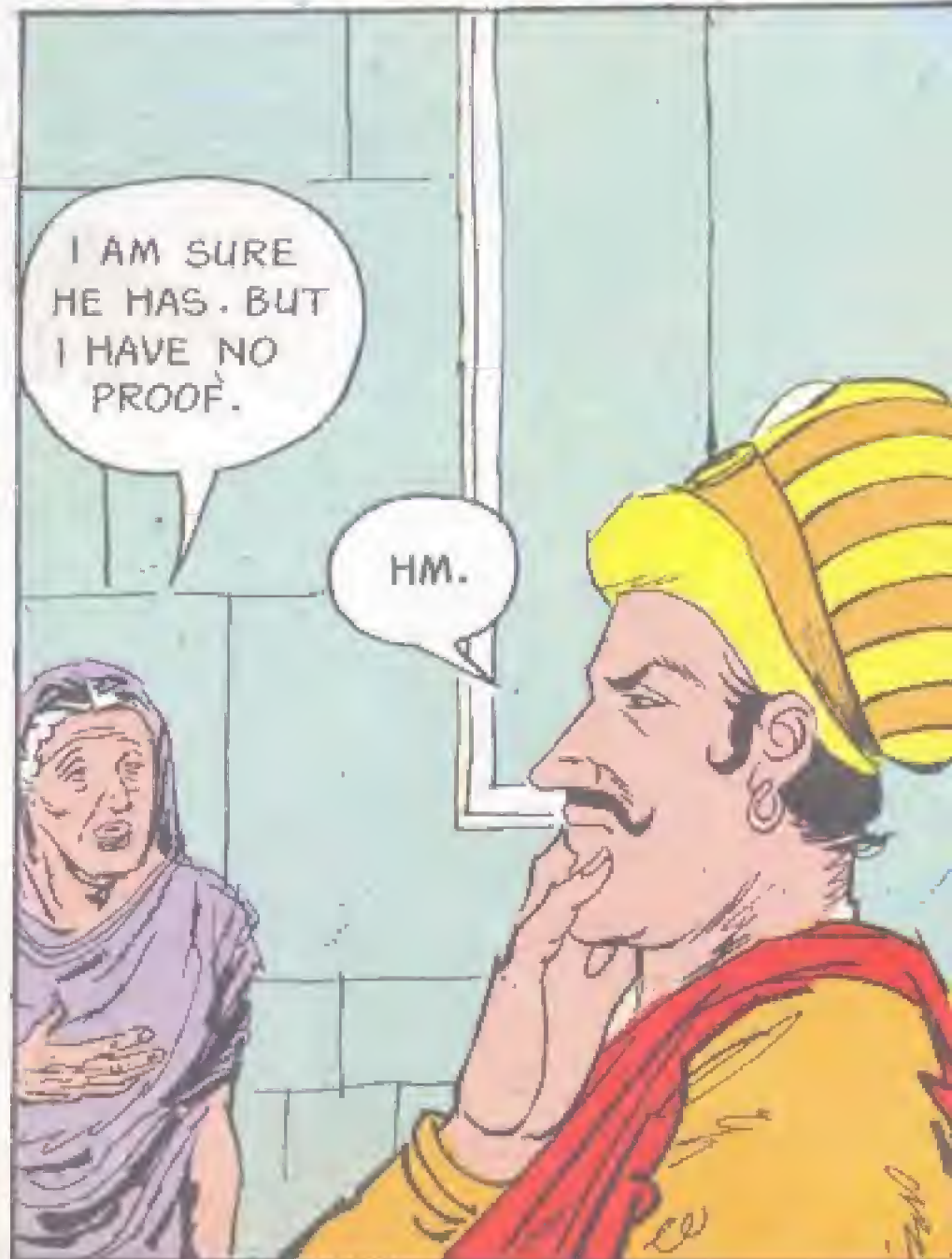
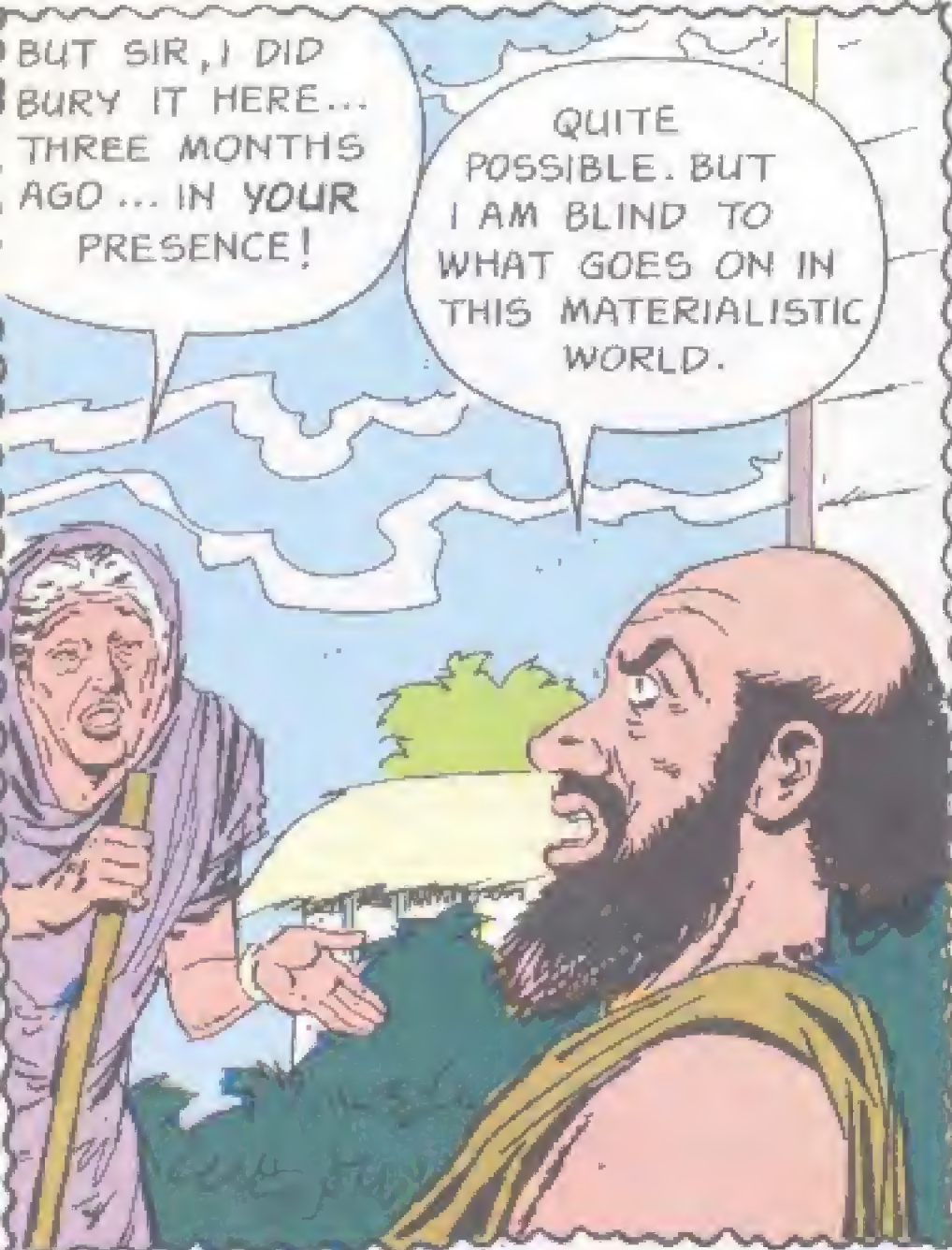
"SO I WENT TO THE CORNER."

IT'S GONE!

"I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES."

O HOLY ONE,
MY COINS! WHERE
ARE MY COINS?

BEGONE,
WOMAN. DON'T
BOTTER ME WITH
SUCH WORLDLY
MATTERS.





WELL, WE'LL SOON
FIND OUT.
LISTEN CAREFULLY...

A LITTLE LATER —



THAT'S
THE PLACE,
HUZUR.

GOOD. NOW
HIDE BEHIND THIS
TREE. AND REMEM-
BER, YOU MUST WALK
INTO THE HUT ONLY
WHEN I FALL AT HIS
FEET FOR THE
SECOND TIME.



NOT A MOMENT
EARLIER NOR
A MOMENT
LATER.

I WILL ENTER
THE HUT AT THE
EXACT MOMENT,
HUZUR.

BIRBAL WENT INTO THE HUT AND FELL PROSTRATE IN FRONT OF THE MENDICANT.



I HAVE HEARD PEOPLE TALK ABOUT YOUR SPIRITUAL EMINENCE. TODAY I HAVE HAD THE GOOD FORTUNE OF RECEIVING YOUR BLESSINGS.

I WONDER WHAT HE HAS IN THE CASKET. GOLD? JEWELS?



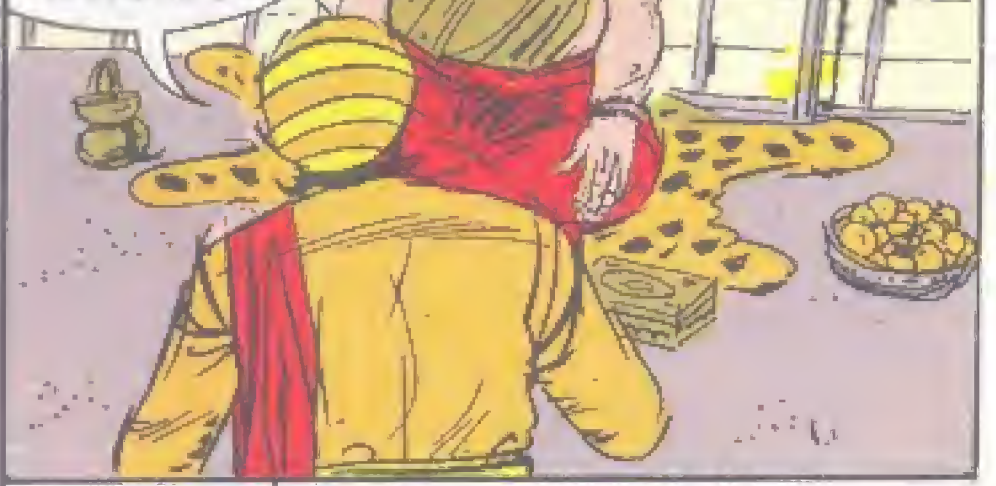
HOLY ONE, I HATE TO TROUBLE YOU WITH THE PROBLEMS WE FOOLISH MORTALS HAVE. BUT...

SPEAK UP, CHILD. LET ME HELP YOU IF I CAN.



NO, SIR. YOU MUSTN'T. YOU ARE A MAN OF GOD. I SHOULDN'T BURDEN YOU WITH WORLDLY WORRIES.

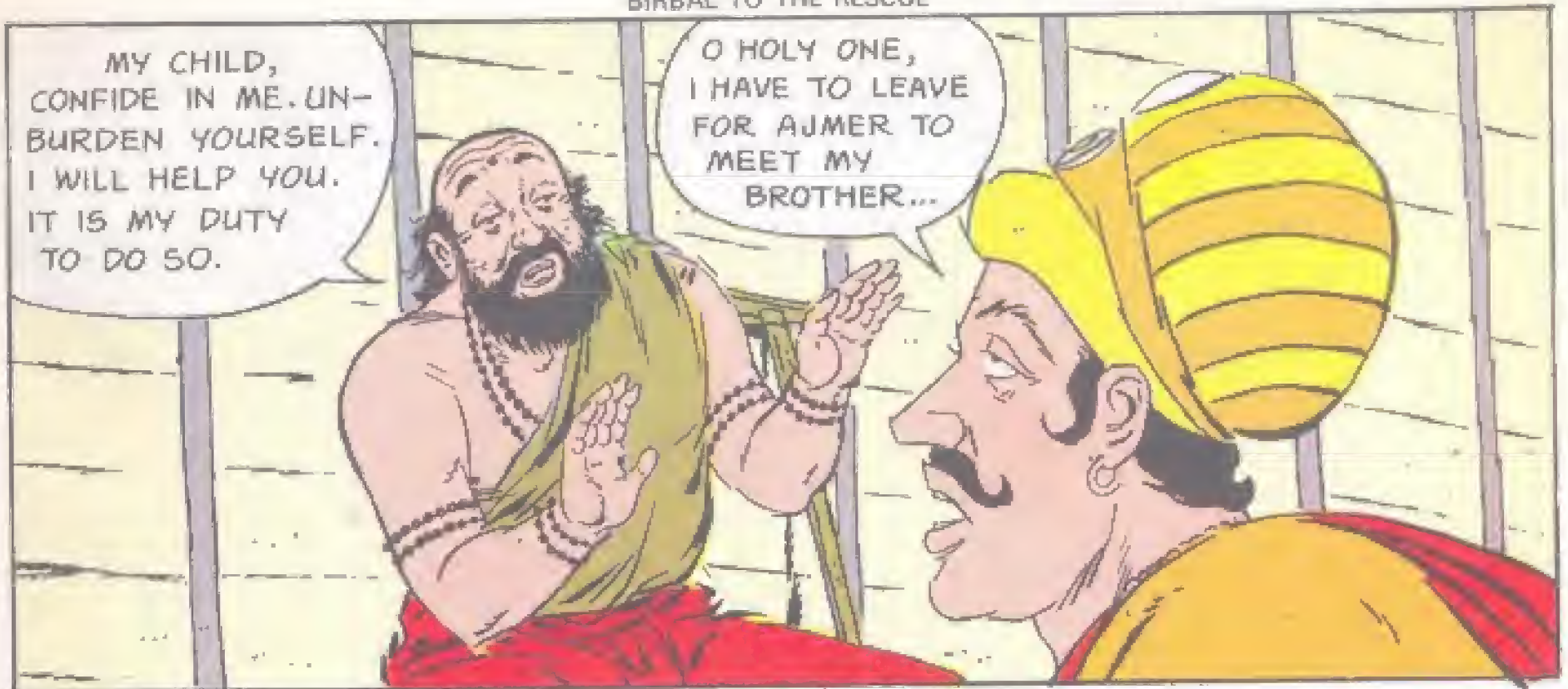
WHAT! IS HE GOING AWAY WITH THE CASKET?

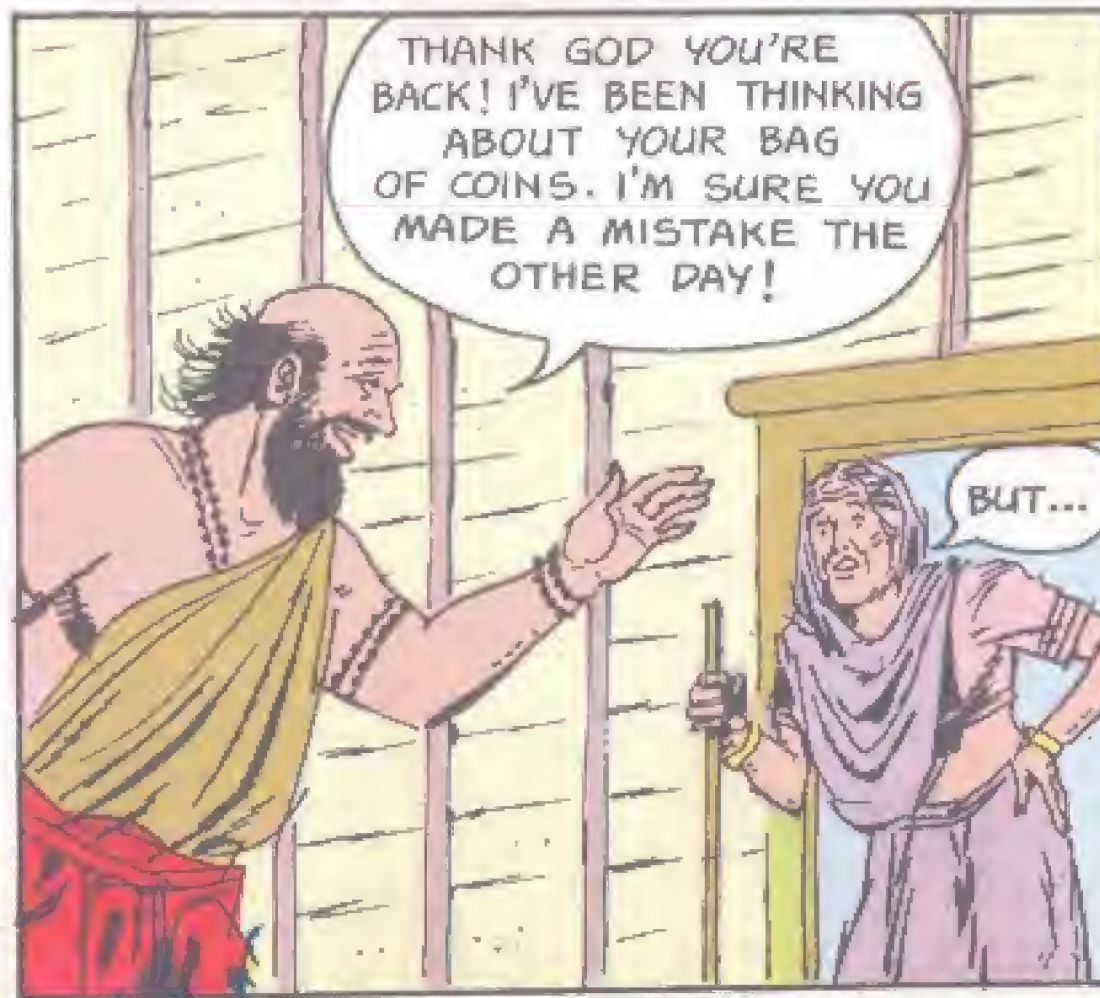
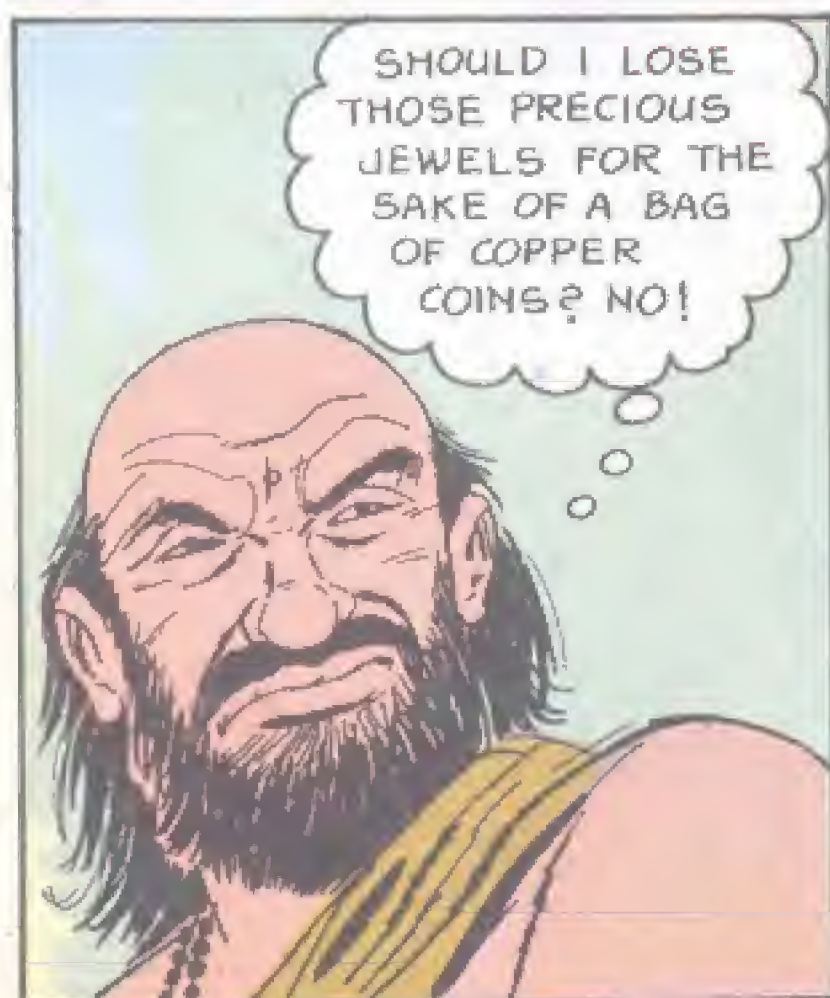


BUT... BUT WHO ELSE CAN I TRUST IN THIS WICKED, WICKED WORLD? PLEASE GUIDE ME.

HE IS WAVERING. I MUST LAY HANDS ON THAT CASKET.











THE PERFECT PORTRAIT

ONE DAY, BIRBAL WAS SURPRISED TO FIND THE NORMALLY CHEERFUL COURT ARTIST LOOKING GLUM.

WHAT'S THE MATTER, MY FRIEND?

MY REPUTATION IS AT STAKE.

BUT YOU ARE THE BEST ARTIST THE COURT HAS EVER KNOWN. I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

YOU WILL, WHEN I'VE TOLD YOU THE WHOLE STORY.

THE ARTIST TOOK BIRBAL TO HIS HOUSE AND SHOWED HIM FIVE PORTRAITS.

THEY ARE OF A RICH NOBLE.

AREN'T THESE OF THE SAME MAN?

"A MONTH AGO HE THREW ME A CHALLENGE."

I BET, YOU CAN'T
CREATE AN EXACT
LIKENESS OF
ME.

I BET,
I CAN.

"HE POSED AND I GOT DOWN TO WORK.
AT LAST —"

THAT'S ALL. I'LL
GIVE THE PORTRAIT
A FEW FINISHING
TOUCHES AND
BRING IT TO YOU
TOMORROW.

"ON THE FOLLOWING DAY, WHEN I HANDED
THE PORTRAIT TO HIM, CONFIDENT OF
WINNING THE BET —"

THIS WON'T DO!
IT ISN'T AN EXACT
LIKENESS. I DON'T
HAVE A BEARD!

BUT YOU DID
HAVE ONE
WHEN YOU
POSED FOR
THE PORTRAIT!

A BET IS A BET! AND AN EXACT
LIKENESS AN EXACT LIKENESS!
HERE! YOU MAY KEEP THIS AS
A MEMENTO.

PLEASE GIVE
ME ANOTHER
CHANCE.

ALL RIGHT.
YOU MAY
TRY AGAIN.

"HE POSED FOR ME ONCE MORE.
WHEN I TOOK THE FINISHED
PORTRAIT TO HIM —"



BUT
WHY THIS
MOUSTACHE?

DO I HAVE A
MOUSTACHE?

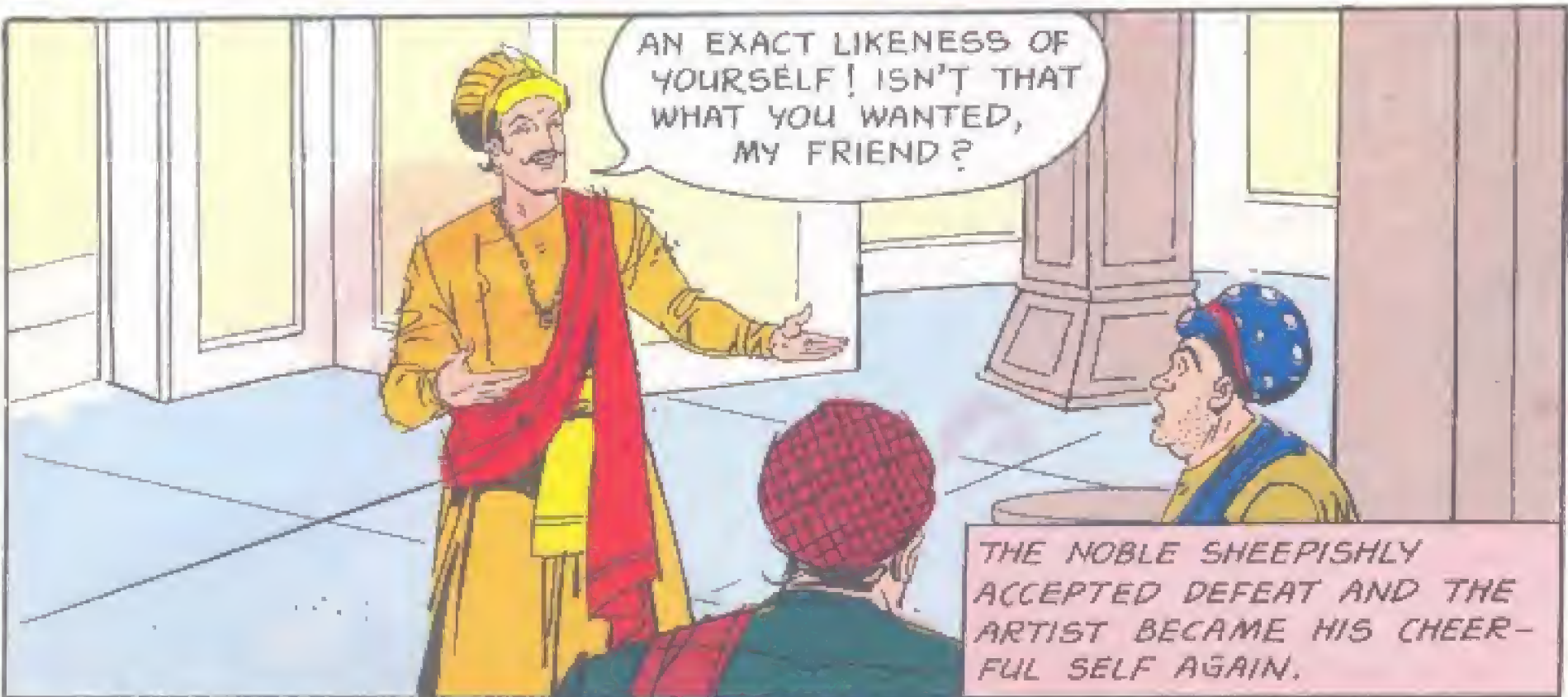
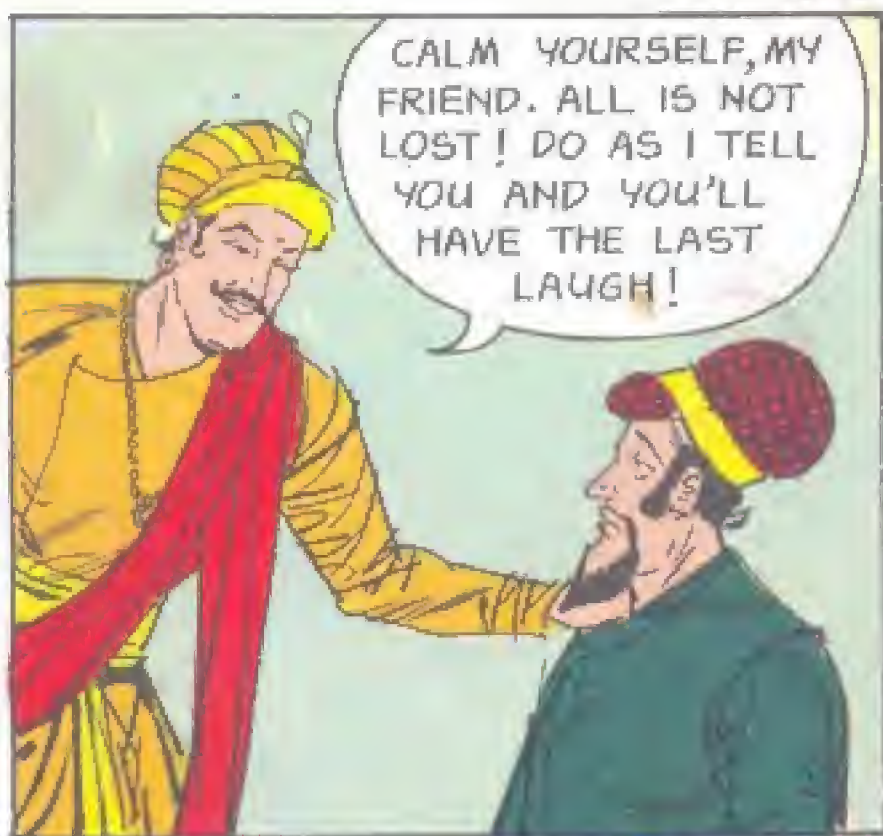
YOU'VE
SHAVED IT
OFF TODAY.

NO MORE OF YOUR
CHEEK, YOUNG MAN!
THE COURT WILL
SOON KNOW WHAT
KIND OF ARTIST
YOU ARE!

NO! PLEASE
GIVE ME ANOTHER
CHANCE!

ONLY AFTER FIVE
SUCH SITTINGS,
DID I REALISE THAT
HE WAS OUT TO
RUIN MY
REPUTATION!

OH! WHAT A
FOOL I'VE
BEEN! HOW
COULD I...



SPEAK THE TRUTH BUT MAKE IT PLEASANT



IF BIRBAL'S NEIGHBOUR HAD A WEAKNESS, IT WAS TO HAVE HIS FORTUNE TOLD.

SUDDENLY —

YOU FRAUD! DON'T YOU DARE COME THIS WAY AGAIN!



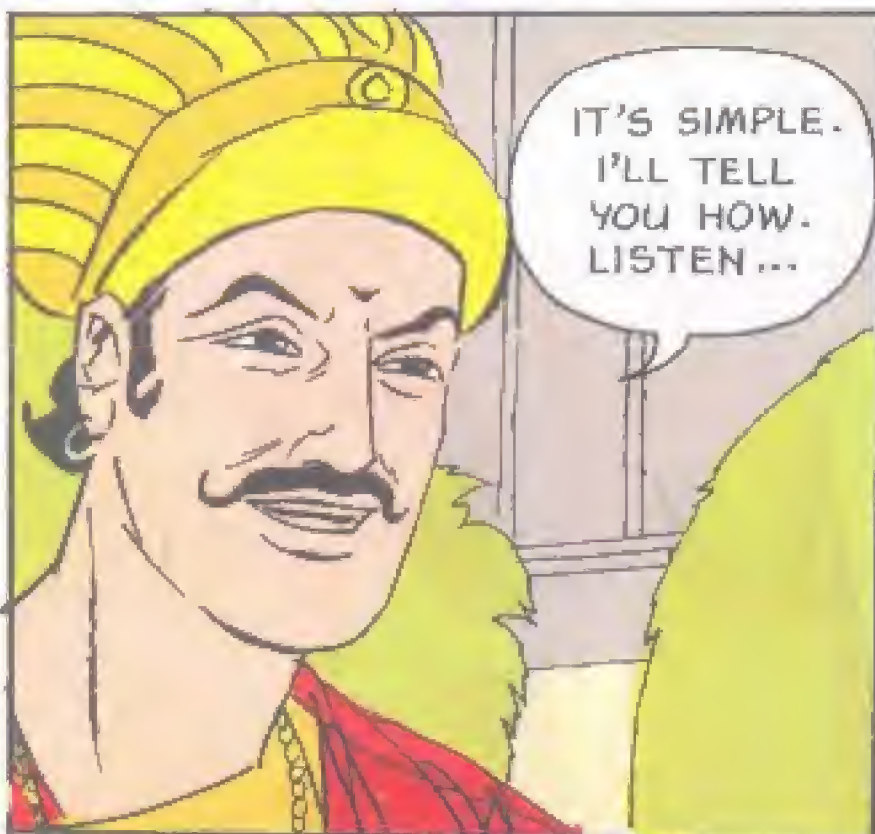
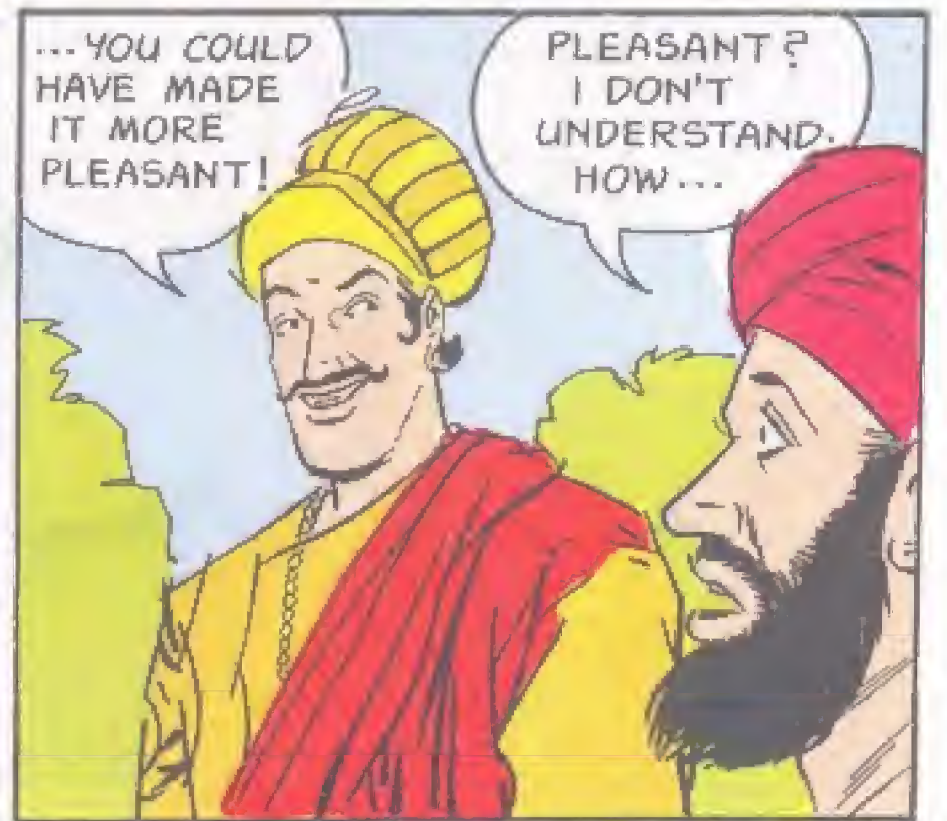
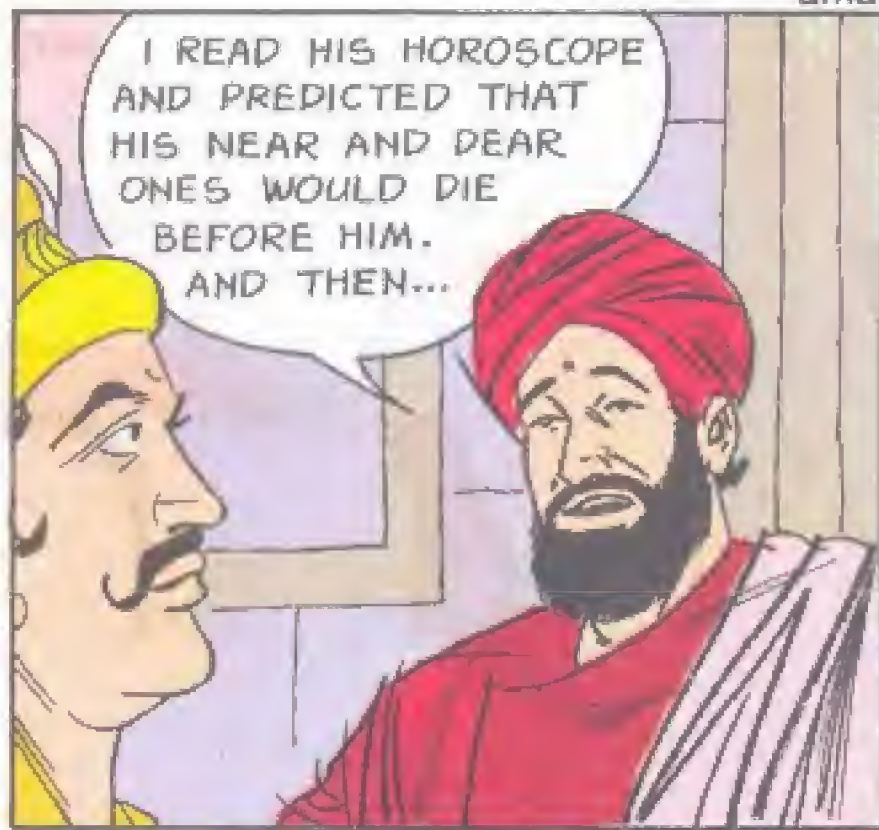
I WON'T! EVER!

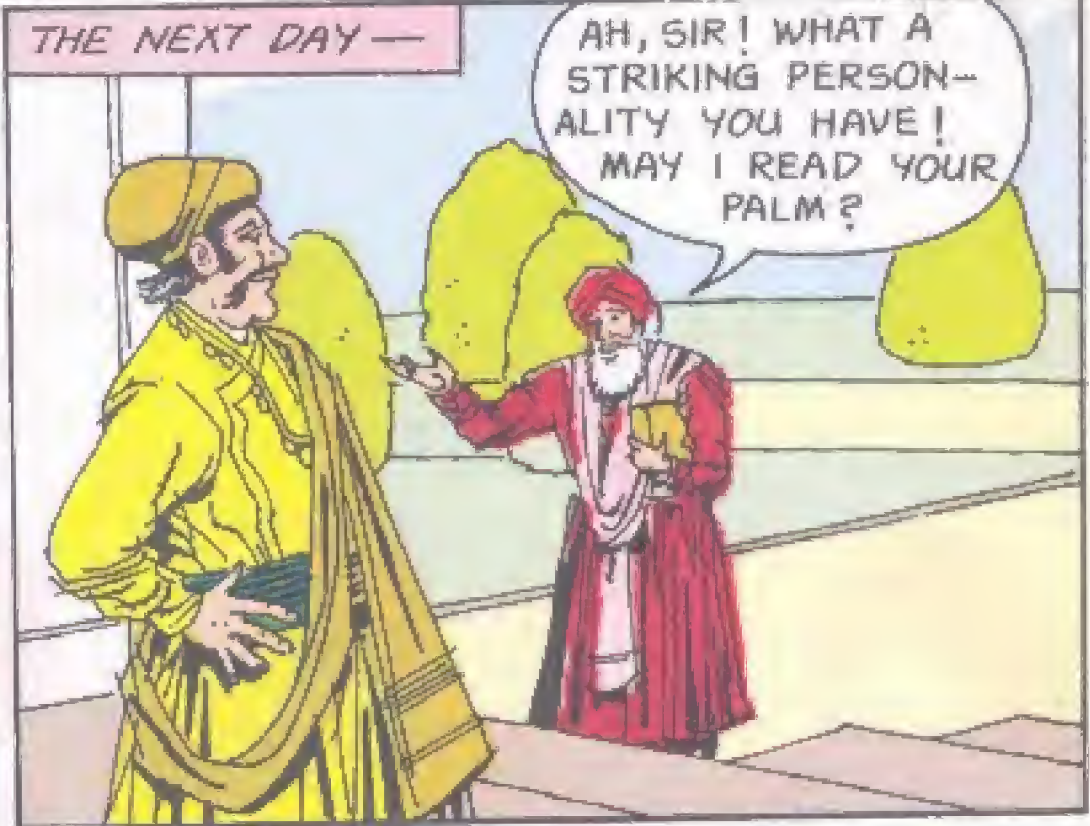


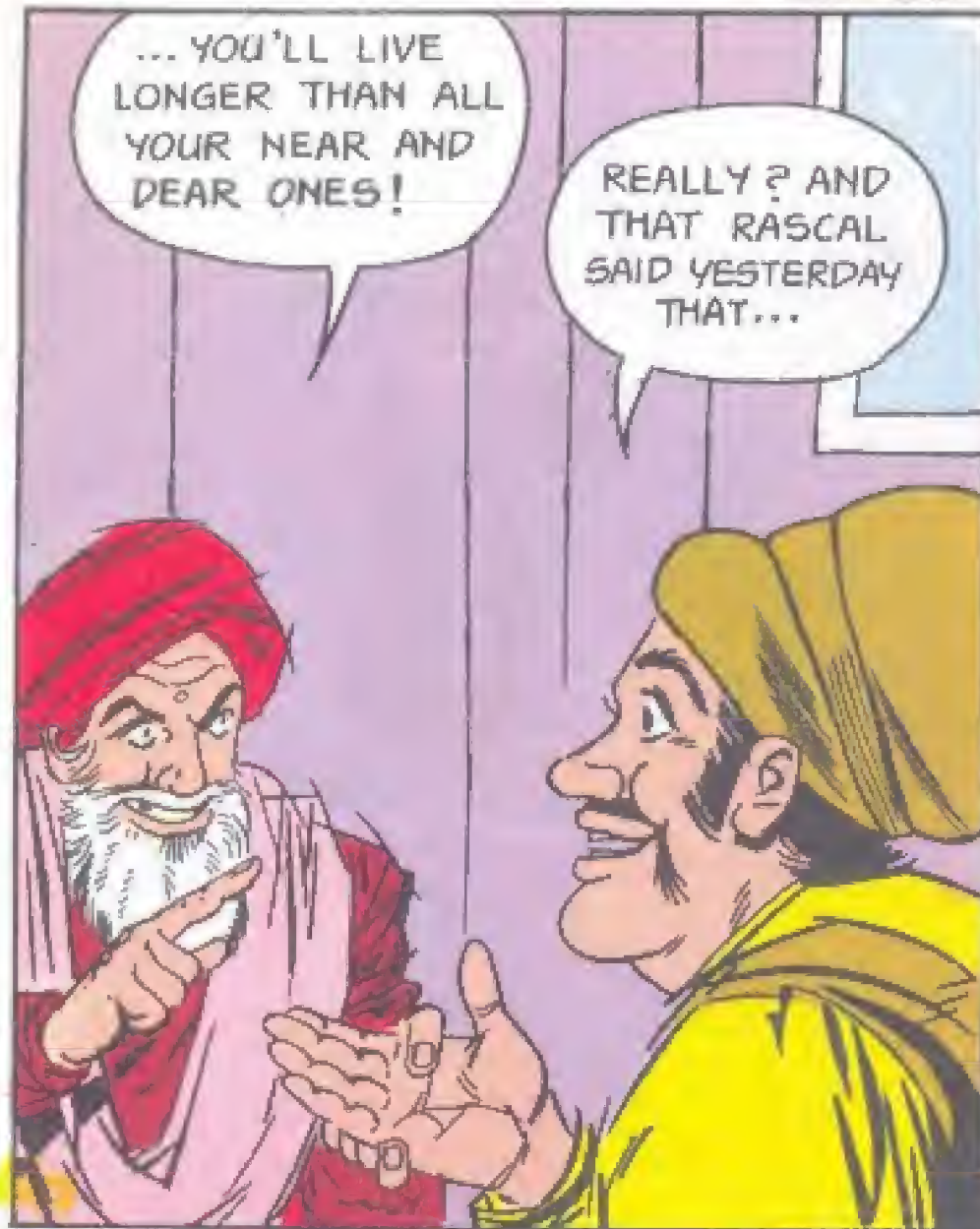
BIRBAL WENT UP TO THE MAN.

WHAT DID YOU DO TO MAKE HIM SO ANGRY?

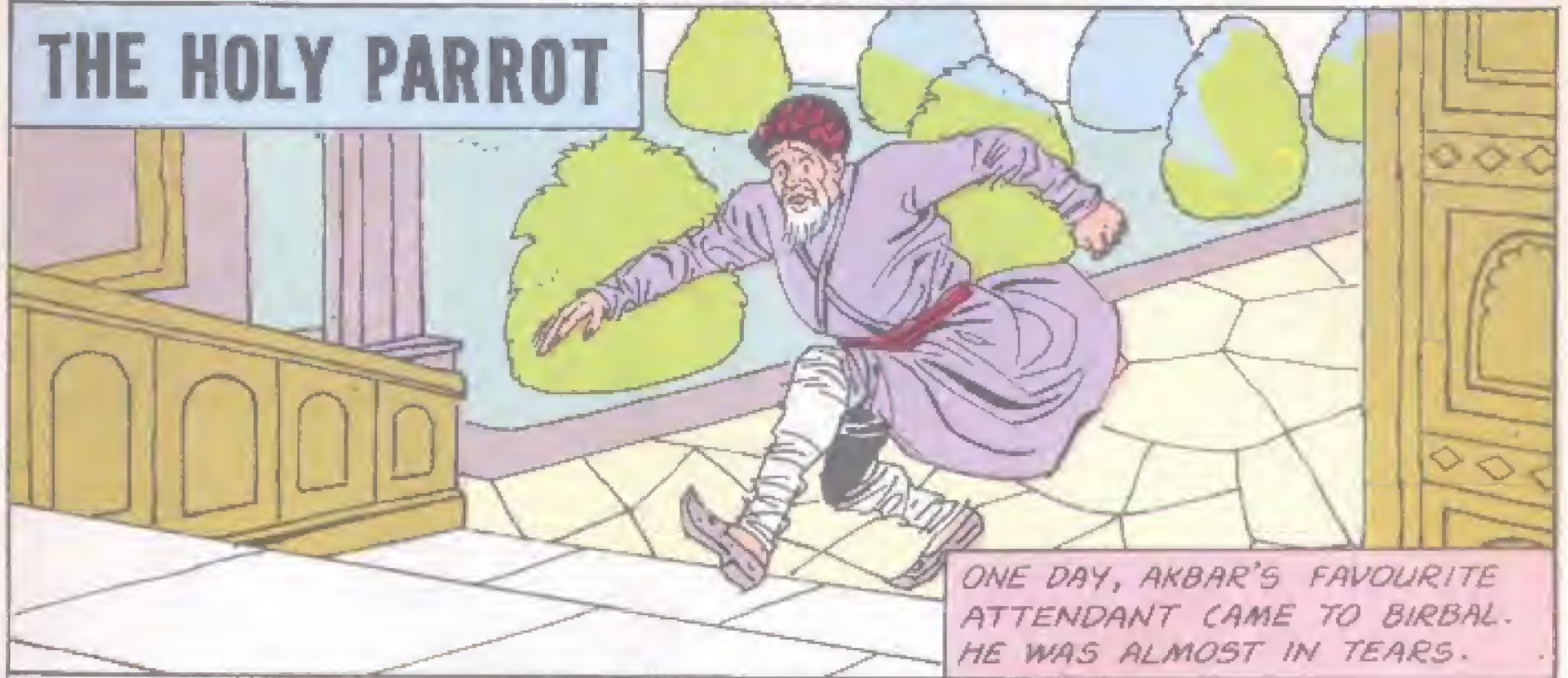




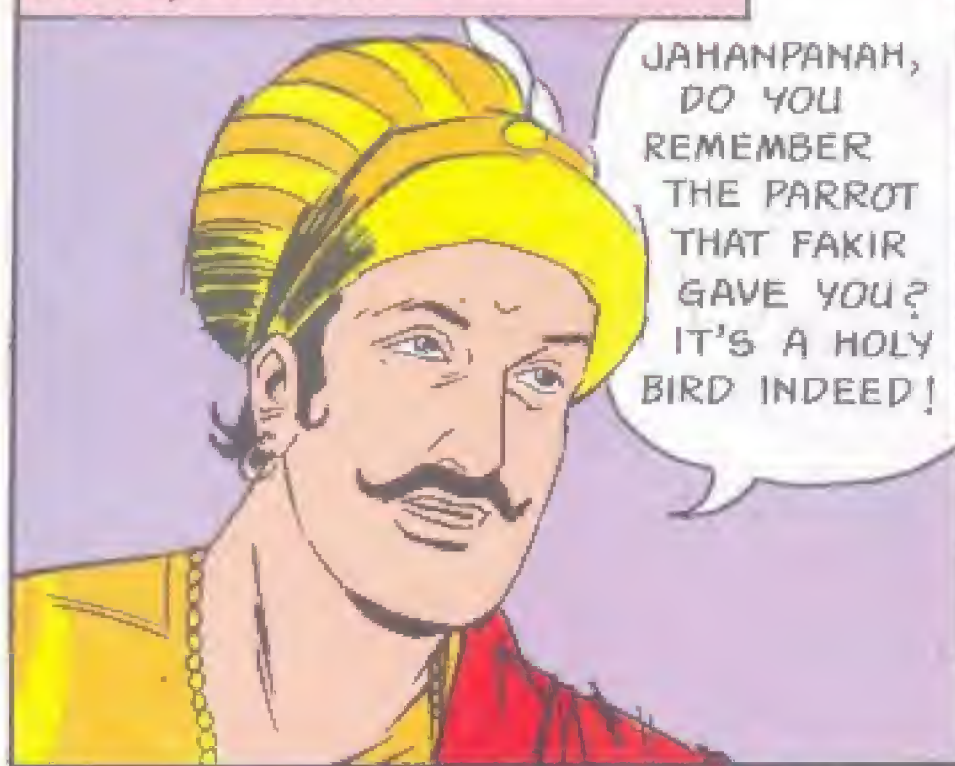




THE HOLY PARROT



LATER, AT AKBAR'S COURT —



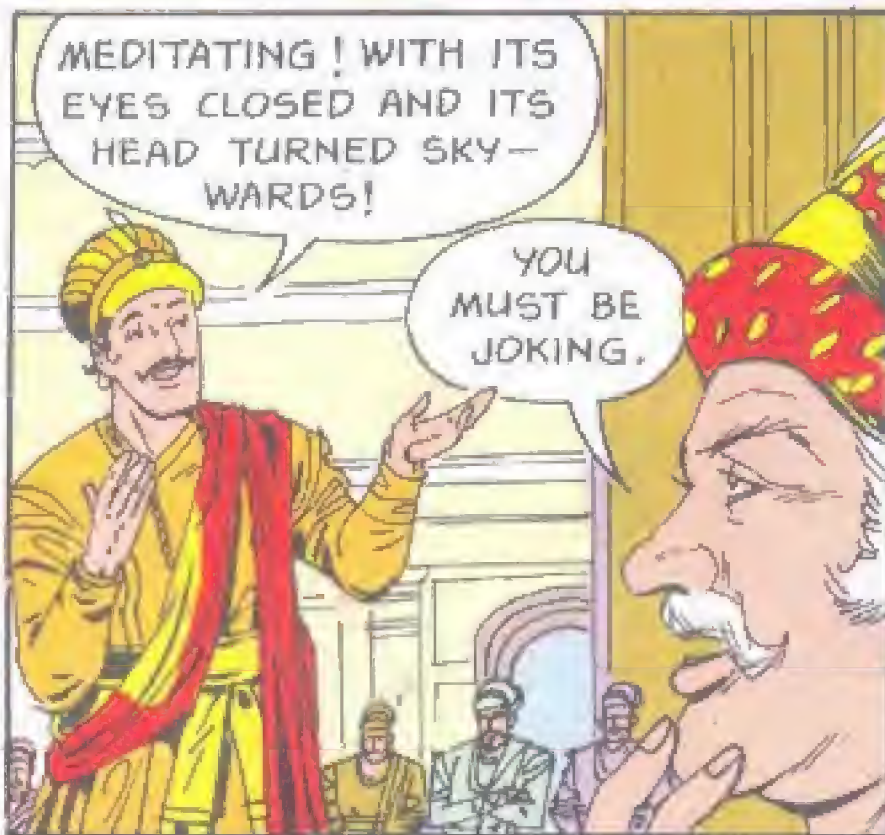
A HOLY BIRD,
INDEED. HA!
HA! HA!

IT IS, JAHANPANAHA.
I HAD GONE TO SEE IT.
AND WHAT DO YOU
THINK IT WAS
DOING?



MEDITATING! WITH ITS
EYES CLOSED AND ITS
HEAD TURNED SKY-
WARDS!

YOU
MUST BE
JOKING.



SO THE TWO WENT TO THE ATTENDANT'S
HOUSE. WHEN AKBAR SAW THE BIRD —



THIS BIRD IS DEAD!
AND DON'T TELL ME
YOU DIDN'T KNOW IT.

I DID. BUT
I DIDN'T
WANT TO BE
BEHEADED!



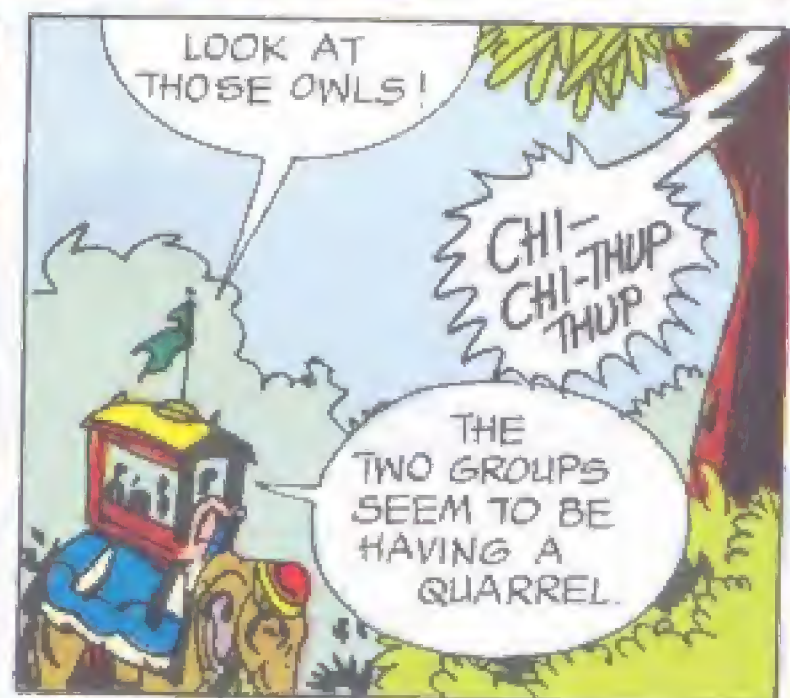
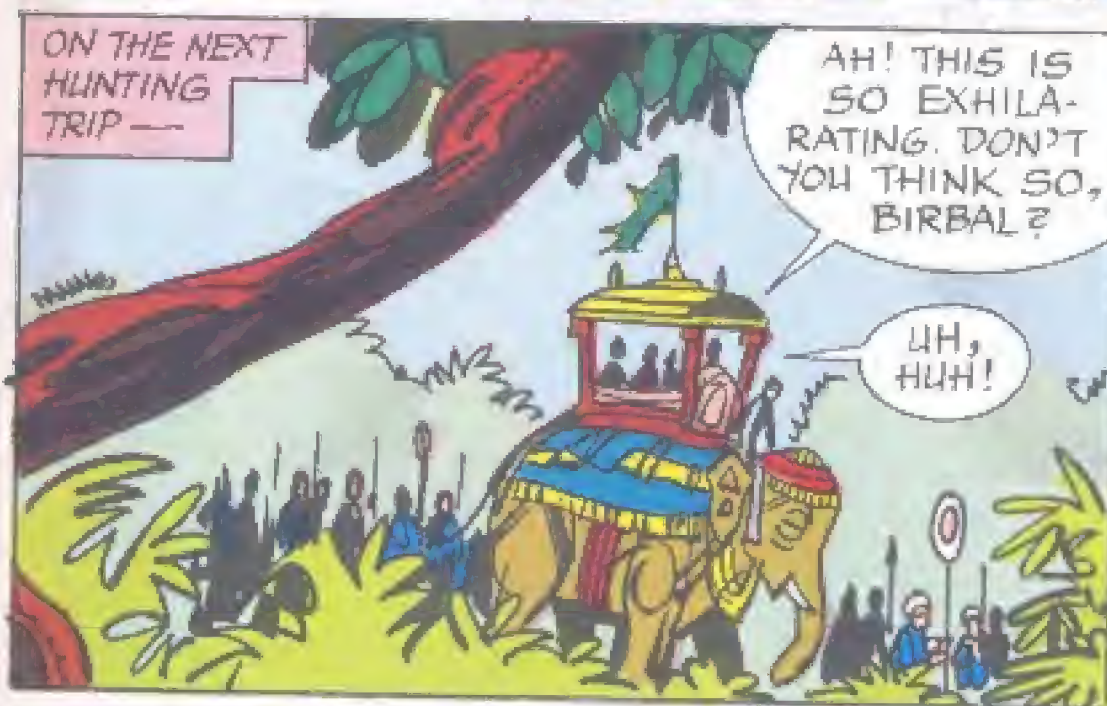
ONLY THEN DID AKBAR REMEMBER
WHAT HE HAD TOLD HIS ATTENDANT.

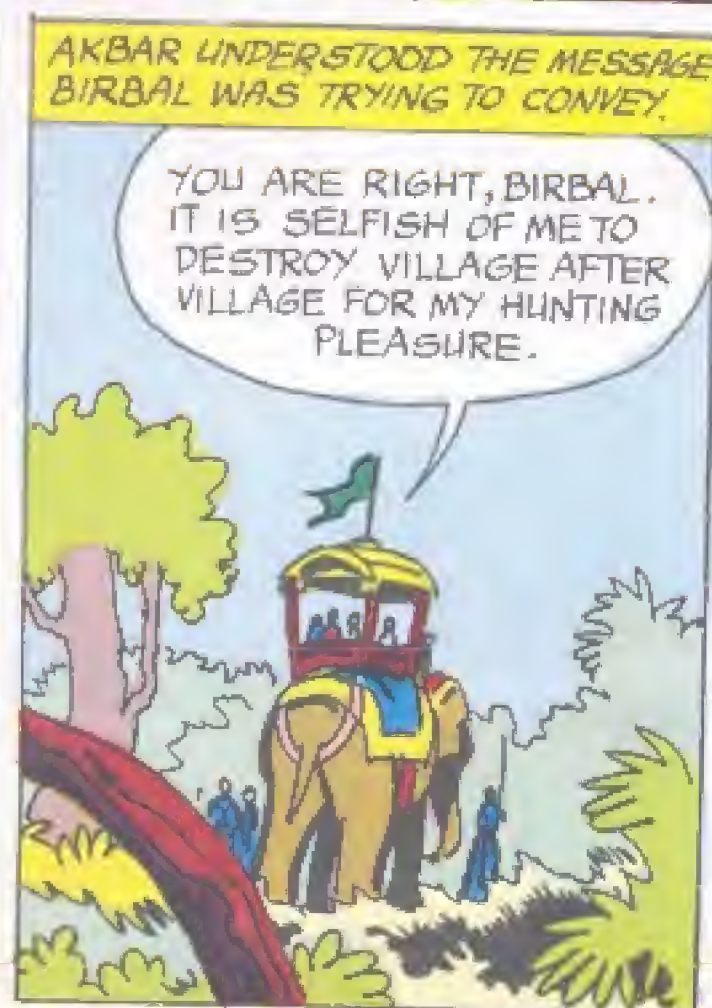
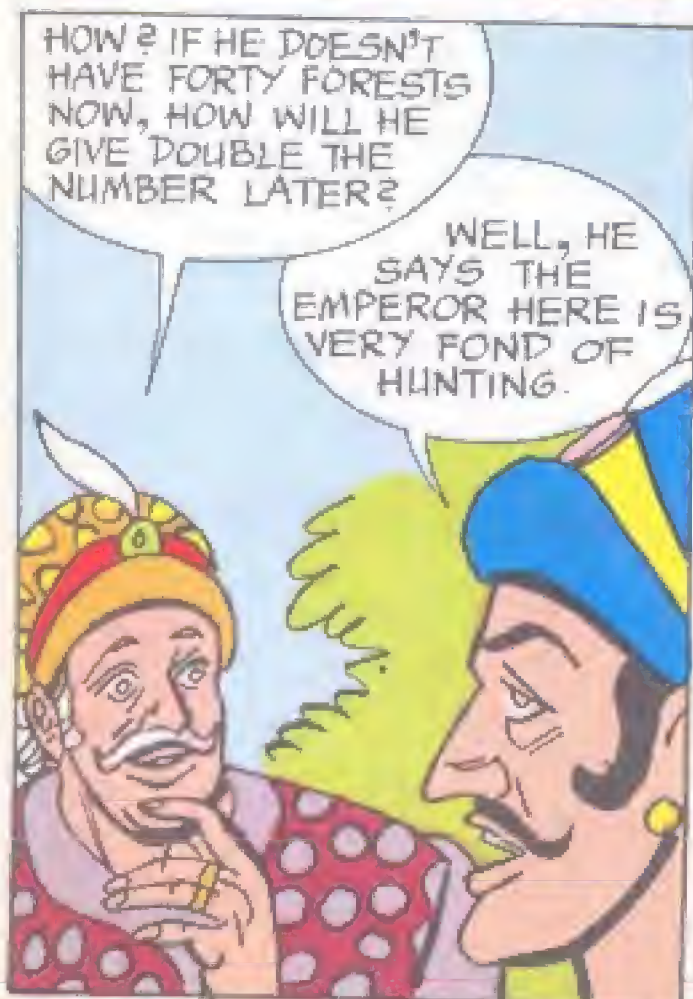
WELL! WELL! WELL! YOU'VE
SAVED YET ANOTHER HEAD,
BIRBAL. AND I'M GRATEFUL
TO YOU FOR IT.



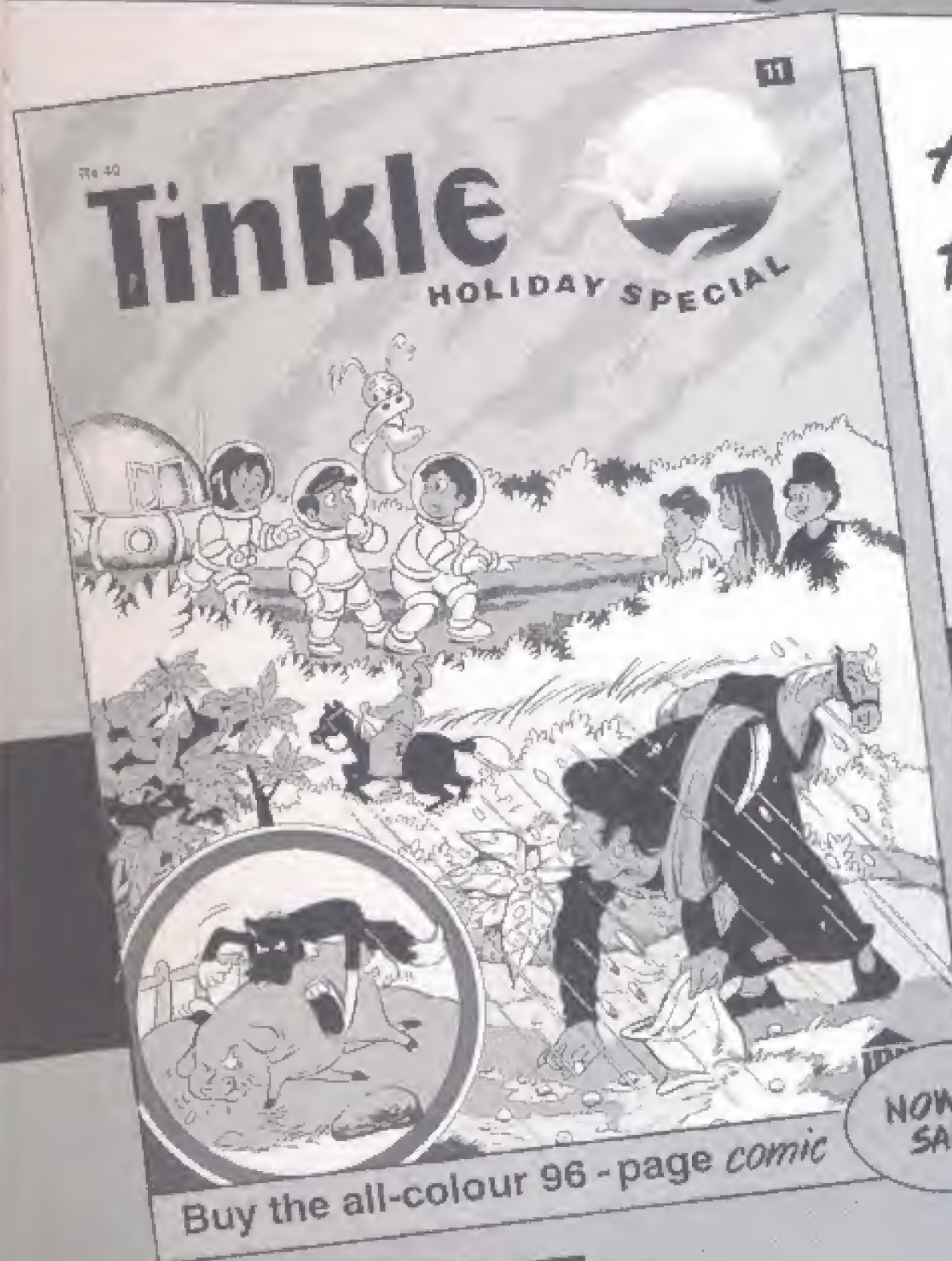
AKBAR THE HUNTER

AKBAR WAS EXTREMELY FOND OF HUNTING. ONE DAY—





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Add some
festive joy to
the fun and
celebrations

A sparkling collection
of all-new folk-tales,
fairy tales, mystery
and adventure.



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SALE!

TINKLE

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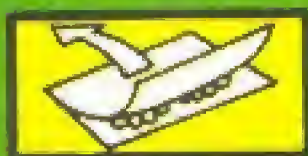
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HOW TO USE THE BIG BABOL TATTOO



Peel the yellow protective paper.



Place the transfer (front side up) on the skin and press down firmly.



Rub on top of the transfer area with any blunt object for a few seconds.



Remove the top layer.



See. You don't even need water!

PERFETTI